An exhortation to the taking of the Solemne League and Covenant for Reformation and defence of Religion, the Honour and happineſſe of the King, and the Peace and ſafety of the three Kingdomes of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*.

IF the power of Religion, or ſolid Reaſon, if Loyalty to the King, and piety to their Native Country, or love to themſelves, and naturall affection to their poſterity, if the Example of men touched with a deep ſenſe of all theſe, or extraordinary ſucceſſe from God thereupon, can awaken an embroyled bleeding remnant, to imbrace the ſoveraigne and onely meanes of their recovery, there can be no doubt but this Solemne League and Covenant will finde, whereſoever it ſhall bee tendered, a people ready to entertaine it with all cheerefulneſſe and duty.

And were it not commended to the Kingdome by the concurrent encouragement of the Honourable Houſes of Parliament, the Aſſembly of Divines, the renowned City of London, multitudes of other perſons of eminent rank and qnality in this Nation, and the whole Body of Scotland, who have all willingly ſworn and ſubſcribed it, with rejoycing at the Oath, ſo graciouſly ſeconded from Heaven already, by blaſting the Counſels, and breaking the power of the Enemy more than ever; yet it goeth forth in its own ſtrength, with ſuch convincing evidence of equity, Truth and Righteouſneſſe, as may raiſe in all (not willfully ignorant, or miſerably ſeduced) inflamed affections to joyne with their Brethren in this happy Bond, for putting an end to the preſent miſeries, and for ſaving both of King and Kingdome from utter ruine, now ſo ſtrongly and openly laboured by the Popiſh faction, and ſuch as have beene bewitched and beſotted by that viperous and bloody generation.

For what is there almoſt in this Covenant, which was not for ſubſtance either expreſſed or manifeſtly included in that ſolemne *Proteſtation* of *May* 5. 1641. wherein the whole Kingdome ſtands ingaged untill this day? The ſinfull neglect whereof, doth (as we may juſtly feare) open one floodgate the more to let in all theſe calamities upon the Kingdome, and caſt upon it a neceſſity of renewing Covenant, and of entring into this.

If it be ſaid, the extirpation of Prelacy, to wit, the whole Hierarchicall Government (ſtanding, as yet, by the knowne Lawes of the Kingdome) is new, and unwarrantable: This will appeare to all impartiall underſtandings, (though new) to be not onely warrantable, but neceſſary; if they conſider (to omit what ſome ſay, that this Government was never formally eſtabliſhed by any Lawes of this Kingdome at all) that the very life and ſoule thereof is already taken from it by an Act paſſed this preſent Parliament, ſo as (like *Jezabels* Carcaſſe, of which no more was left but the skull, the feete, and the palmes of her hands) nothing of juriſdiction remaines but what is precarious in them, and voluntary in thoſe who ſubmit unto them: that their whole Government is at beſt but a humane conſtitution, and ſuch as is found and adjudged by both Houſes of Parliament, (in which, the judgement of the whole Kingdome is involved and Declared) not onely very prejudiciall to the Civill State, but a great hinderance alſo to the perfect Reformation of Religion; Yea, who knoweth it not to be too much an enemy thereunto, and deſtructive to the power of godlineſſe, and pure adminiſtration of the Ordinances of Chriſt? which moved the well-affected almoſt throughout this Kingdom, long ſince to Petition this Parliament (as hath been deſired before, even in the Reigne of Queen *Elizabeth* and of King *Iames*) for a totall abolition of the ſame. Nor is any man hereby bound to offer any violence to their perſons, but only, in his place and calling, to indevour their extirpation in a lawfull way.

And as for thoſe Clergy-men, who pretend that they (above all others) cannot Covenant to extirpate that Government, becauſe they have (as they ſay) taken a ſolemne Oath to obey the Biſhops, *in licitis et honeſtis*: they can tell, if they pleaſe, that they that have ſworn obedience to the Laws of the Land, are not thereby prohibited from indevouring by all lawfull meanes the abolition of thoſe Lawes, when they prove inconvenient or miſchievous. And if yet there ſhould any Oath be found, into which any Miniſters or others have entred, not warranted by the Laws of God and the Land, in this caſe, they muſt teach themſelves and others, that ſuch Oathes call for repentance, not pertinacy in them.

If it be pleaded that this Covenant croſſeth the Oaths of *Supremacy* and *Allegiance*; there

An exhortation to the taking of the Solemne League and Covenant for Reformation and defence of Religion, the Honour and happineſſe of the King, and the Peace and ſafety of the three Kingdomes of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*.

IF the power of Religion, or ſolid Reaſon, if Loyalty to the King, and piety to their Native Country, or love to themſelves, and naturall affection to their poſterity, if the Example of men touched with a deep ſenſe of all theſe, or extraordinary ſucceſſe from God thereupon, can awaken an embroyled bleeding remnant, to imbrace the ſoveraigne and onely meanes of their recovery, there can be no doubt but this Solemne League and Covenant will finde, whereſoever it ſhall bee tendered, a people ready to entertaine it with all cheerefulneſſe and duty.

And were it not commended to the Kingdome by the concurrent encouragement of the Honourable Houſes of Parliament, the Aſſembly of Divines, the renowned City of London, multitudes of other perſons of eminent rank and qnality in this Nation, and the whole Body of Scotland, who have all willingly ſworn and ſubſcribed it, with rejoycing at the Oath, ſo graciouſly ſeconded from Heaven already, by blaſting the Counſels, and breaking the power of the Enemy more than ever; yet it goeth forth in its own ſtrength, with ſuch convincing evidence of equity, Truth and Righteouſneſſe, as may raiſe in all (not willfully ignorant, or miſerably ſeduced) inflamed affections to joyne with their Brethren in this happy Bond, for putting an end to the preſent miſeries, and for ſaving both of King and Kingdome from utter ruine, now ſo ſtrongly and openly laboured by the Popiſh faction, and ſuch as have beene bewitched and beſotted by that viperous and bloody generation.

For what is there almoſt in this Covenant, which was not for ſubſtance either expreſſed or manifeſtly included in that ſolemne *Proteſtation* of *May* 5. 1641. wherein the whole Kingdome ſtands ingaged untill this day? The ſinfull neglect whereof, doth (as we may juſtly feare) open one floodgate the more to let in all theſe calamities upon the Kingdome, and caſt upon it a neceſſity of renewing Covenant, and of entring into this.

If it be ſaid, the extirpation of Prelacy, to wit, the whole Hierarchicall Government (ſtanding, as yet, by the knowne Lawes of the Kingdome) is new, and unwarrantable: This will appeare to all impartiall underſtandings, (though new) to be not onely warrantable, but neceſſary; if they conſider (to omit what ſome ſay, that this Government was never formally eſtabliſhed by any Lawes of this Kingdome at all) that the very life and ſoule thereof is already taken from it by an Act paſſed this preſent Parliament, ſo as (like *Jezabels* Carcaſſe, of which no more was left but the skull, the feete, and the palmes of her hands) nothing of juriſdiction remaines but what is precarious in them, and voluntary in thoſe who ſubmit unto them: that their whole Government is at beſt but a humane conſtitution, and ſuch as is found and adjudged by both Houſes of Parliament, (in which, the judgement of the whole Kingdome is involved and Declared) not onely very prejudiciall to the Civill State, but a great hinderance alſo to the perfect Reformation of Religion; Yea, who knoweth it not to be too much an enemy thereunto, and deſtructive to the power of godlineſſe, and pure adminiſtration of the Ordinances of Chriſt? which moved the well-affected almoſt throughout this Kingdom, long ſince to Petition this Parliament (as hath been deſired before, even in the Reigne of Queen *Elizabeth* and of King *Iames*) for a totall abolition of the ſame. Nor is any man hereby bound to offer any violence to their perſons, but only, in his place and calling, to indevour their extirpation in a lawfull way.

And as for thoſe Clergy-men, who pretend that they (above all others) cannot Covenant to extirpate that Government, becauſe they have (as they ſay) taken a ſolemne Oath to obey the Biſhops, *in licitis et honeſtis*: they can tell, if they pleaſe, that they that have ſworn obedience to the Laws of the Land, are not thereby prohibited from indevouring by all lawfull meanes the abolition of thoſe Lawes, when they prove inconvenient or miſchievous. And if yet there ſhould any Oath be found, into which any Miniſters or others have entred, not warranted by the Laws of God and the Land, in this caſe, they muſt teach themſelves and others, that ſuch Oathes call for repentance, not pertinacy in them.

If it be pleaded that this Covenant croſſeth the Oaths of *Supremacy* and *Allegiance*; there

there can be nothing further from truth: for this Covenant binds all, and more strongly engageth them to *preserve and defend the Kings Majesty's person, and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true Religion and Liberties of the Kingdomes.*

That scruple, that this is done without the Kings consent, will soone be removed, if it be remembred that the *Protestation* of the fifth of *May* before mentioned, was in the same manner voted and carried not by both Houses, and after (by order of one House alone) sent abroad to all the Kingdome, his Majesty not excepting against it, nor giving any stop to the taking of it, albeit he was then resident at *Windsor*.

Thus *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* drew all the people into a Covenant, without any speciall Commission from the Persian Monarchs (then their Soveraigns) so to doe, albeit they were not free Subjects, but Vassals, and one of them the meniall Servant of *Artaxerxes*, then by Conquest King of *Judah* also. *Ezra.* 10. *Neh.* 9. *Neh.* 1.

Nor hath this doctrine or practise been deemed seditious or unwarrantable by the Princes that have sate upon the English Throne, but justified and defended by Queen *Elizabeth* of blessed memory, with the expence of much Treasure and Noble blood, in the united Provinces of the Netherlands combined not only without, but against the unjust violence of *Philip* of *Spaine*; King *James* followed her steps to a haire, as to approve their union, and to enter into league with them as free States; which is continued by his Majesty now reigning, unto this day; who both by his expedition for reliefe of *Rochel* in *France*, and his strict confederacy with the Prince of *Orange*, and the States Generall, notwithstanding all the importunity of *Spaine* to the contrary, hath set to his Seale, that all that had been done by his Royall Ancestors, in maintenance of those who had so engaged and combined themselves, was just and warrantable.

And what had become of the Religion, Lawes, and Liberties of our sister Nation of *Scotland*, had they not entred into such a solemne League and Covenant at the beginning of the late troubles there? which course however it was at first, by the Popish and Prelatick Projectors, represented to his Majesty as an offence of the highest nature, justly deserving exemplary punishment by the levy of a powerfull Armye; yet when the matter came afterwards in coole blood to bee debated, first by Commissioners of both Kingdomes, and then in open Parliament here, (when all those of either House, who are now engaged at *Oxford*, were present in Parliament, that gave their consents) it was found, allowed and declared by the King in Parliament, that our deare Brethren of *Scotland* had done nothing, but what became loyall and obedient Subjects, and were thereupon by Act of Parliament publikely righted in all the Churches of this Kingdome, where they had beene defamed.

Therefore however some men, hoodwinkt and blinded by the artifices of those Jesuiticall Engineers, who have long conspired to sacrifice our Religion to the Idolatry of Rome, our Lawes, Liberties and persons to arbitrary slavery, and our estates to their insatiable avarice, may possibly be deterred and amused with high threats and Declarations, flying up and downe on the wings of the Royall Name and Countenance (now captivated and prostituted to serve all their lusts) to proclaime all Rebells and Traytors who take this Covenant; yet let no faithfull English heart be afraid to joyne with our Brethren of all the three Kingdomes in this solemne League, as sometimes the men of *Israel* (although under another King) did with the men of *Judah*, at the invitation of *Hezekiah*. 2. *Chron.* 30.

What though those tongues set on fire by Hell doe raile and threaten? That God who was pleased to cleare up the innocency of *Mordecai* and the Jewes against all the malitious aspersions of wicked *Haman* to his and their Soveraigne, so as all his plotting produced but this effect, that *when the Kings commandement and decree drew neere to be put in execution, and the enemies of the Iewes hoped to have power over them, it was turned to the contrary, and the Iewes had rule over them that hated them, and laid hands on such as sought their hurt, so as no man could withstand them*; and that same God, who but even as yesterday, vouchsafed to disperse and scatter those dark clouds and fogs which over shadowed that Loyall and Religious Kingdome of *Scotland*, and to make their righteousnesse to shine as cleare as the Sunne at noone day in the very eyes of their greatest enemies, will doubtlessely stand by all those who with singlenesse of heart, and a due sense of their owne sinnes, and a necessity of reformation, shall now enter into an everlasting Covenant with the Lord, never to be forgotten, to put an end to all those unhappy and unnaturall breaches betweene the King and such as are faithfull in the Land; causing their *righteousnesse and praise to spring forth before all the Nations*, to the terror and confusion of those men of blood, the confederate enemies of God and the King, who have long combined, and have now united together the *Esth.* 9.

dregs

dregs and scumme of many Kingdomes, to bury all the glory, honour and liberty of this Nation in the eternall grave of dishonour and destruction.

Die Veneris 9. Februar. 1643.

AN Exhortation concerning the taking of the Solemn League and Covenant, and for satisfying of such Scruples as may arise in the taking of it, was this day read the first and second time; And by Vote upon the Question assented unto, and Ordered to bee forthwith Printed.

H. Elsynge, Cler. Parl. Dom. Com.